

## INVEST IN YOURSELF BOOKS - Success Story

Invest in Yourself, a service driven local bookstore that is committed to providing personal growth books, was started in March of 2003 and is located at 6661 University Avenue in Middleton, Wisconsin. Invest in Yourself provides customers with books and audiotapes that specialize in business & career, health & fitness, family & personal life, wealth & prosperity, and spiritual development. The products include new hardcover and paperback books, Nightingale-Conant audiotape programs and related magazines and gift items. They also have a website at [www.investinyourselfbooks.com](http://www.investinyourselfbooks.com) where a customer can access a database of over two million titles and place orders with real-time transactions, purchase, redeem and check balances on gift cards, and peruse a calendar of events for workshops and author signings that are held at the store.

Coleen Harty, the owner of Invest in Yourself, has the heart of the entrepreneur with ten years of experience in retail. Before starting her business, Coleen did her planning. She got in touch with the Small Business Development Center at UW-Madison and attended their Entrepreneurial classes. She also sought out advice from SCORE – Counselors to America's Small Business. With her business plan in hand, she approached her lender, Cuna Credit Union, who presented her loan request for start-up financing to the SBA. Upon approval of her loan request and with the help and advice of several friends and advisors, she was well on her way.



Invest in Yourself is located in downtown Middleton where the Middleton community plays a decisive role in the success of the business. The convenient location of the bookstore offers easy accessibility and store hours that cover the lunch period and early evening. Their business plan calls for marketing and selling books to middle age women with a focus on the perspectives of women seeking economic independence, personal growth and skills to articulate their needs. Service, quality, convenience, special orders, and ambiance are the main areas of focus at Invest in Yourself.

Invest in Yourself's mission statement *"Our mission is providing customers with a comfortable, caring, customer service oriented atmosphere, in which they are able to find both books and related items that will help them to fully develop the physical, spiritual, and emotional parts of themselves. Others will view us as a company that inspires loyalty and conducts our business with integrity. We will be profitable by controlling expenses, without sacrificing the quality of our products or services."*

While talking with Coleen during the writing of this story, she comes across as a very warm caring person and loves her business. The SBA is proud to have been of assistance to Coleen in the start-up of Invest in Yourself Books.

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